

Castlemaine Naturalist

October 2018

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Monthly newsletter of the
Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club Inc.



Early Nancy, *Wurmbea dioica*

- photo by Bronwyn Silver

Looking for orchids around Smith's Reef 15-9-18

Smith's Reef forest, vicinity of Tatt Town Track and Pipeline Track

Richard Piesse and Peter Turner

Our field trip on Saturday 15th September was led by Richard Piesse with expert assistance from David Elliott, who knows the orchids in the Maldon area well. Seven members and three guests braved the wintry conditions, and were rewarded with a long list of plants, many in flower - and the hail and rain showers only started again as we finished.

We parked the cars on Tatt Town Track near where the rare local examples of Flame Heath are found, and wandered through the bush until we reached Pipeline Track turning west to investigate both sides.

The large Flame Heath bush at the edge of the track remains the only survivor of the 2010 burn on the east side of Tatt Town Track, but there are many small plants - notably White Marianth (*Rhytidosporum procumbens*) - amongst the dense Golden Wattle regrowth. A few Flame Heath were found on the west side of the track.

Plants in flower -

<i>Wurmbea dioica</i>	Early Nancy
<i>Caladenia fuscata</i>	Dusky Caladenia
<i>Cyanicula caerulea</i>	Blue Caladenia
<i>Diuris pardina</i>	Leopard Orchid
<i>Pterostylis cycnocephala</i>	Swan Greenhood
<i>nana</i>	Dwarf
<i>nutans</i>	Nodding
<i>smaragdina</i>	Emerald lipped
<i>Craspedia variabilis</i>	Billy Buttons
<i>Microseris walteri</i>	Yam Daisy
<i>Hibbertia exutiacies</i>	Spiky Guinea-flower
<i>Tetralthea ciliata</i>	Pink Bells
<i>Astroloma conostepoides</i>	Flame Heath

Swan Greenhood –
photo by Martin Hallett



<i>Acacia acinacia</i>	Gold-dust Wattle
<i>aspera</i>	Rough
<i>genistifolia</i>	Spreading
<i>pycnantha</i>	Golden
<i>Daviesia ulicifolia</i>	Gorse Bitter-pea
<i>Platylobium montanum</i> ssp. <i>montanum</i>	Hill Flat-pea

Wednesday Wildflower Wander - 12th September

Richard Piesse

Thirteen members and two visitors wandered along narrow tracks off Boundary Track on the western edge of Wattle Flat State Forest on our first Wildflower Wander for 2018.

In general, the local bush is still very dry – at every step we made serious crunching sounds from the leaf litter, dead grasses and mosses. The bush on the west side of Boundary Track appeared to display more species than the east side, which had been burnt about six years ago. The flower stalks on the Chocolate Lilies and Wax-lip Orchids were very slender and weak, indicating that they may not grow to normal height this season. Likewise, the many flowering Leopard Orchids were shorter than usual.

The following species were recorded in flower:

<i>Wurmbea dioica</i>	Early Nancy
<i>Caladenia fuscata</i>	Dusky Fingers
<i>Cyanicula caerulea</i>	Blue Caladenia
<i>Diuris pardina</i>	Leopard Orchid
<i>Pterostylis nana</i>	Dwarf Greenhood
<i>Drosera auriculata</i>	Tall Sundew
<i>Tetradlea ciliata</i>	Pink Bells
<i>Acacia acinacea</i>	Gold-dust Wattle
<i>Acacia pycnantha</i>	Golden Wattle
<i>Daviesia ulicifolia</i>	Gorse Bitter-pea
<i>Cassytha glabella</i>	Slender Dodder-laurel
<i>Rhytidoporum procumbens</i>	White Marianth
<i>Philothea verrucosa</i>	Fairy Wax-flower

Those in bud were:

<i>Arthropodium strictum</i>	Chocolate Lily
<i>Glossodia major</i>	Wax-lip Orchid
<i>Microseris walteri</i>	Yam Daisy
<i>Ozothamnus obcordatus</i>	Grey Everlasting
<i>Pimelea humilis</i>	Common Rice-Flower

Cyanicula caerulea (top) and *Philothea verrucosa* - Photos by Bronwyn Silver



Wildflower Wander 2 19th September

Kalimna Park circuit with Peter Turner

List by Noel Young – plants in flower (some in bud)

<i>Daviesia ulicifolia</i>	Gorse Bitter-pea
<i>Daviesia leptophylla</i>	Narrow leaf Bitter-pea
<i>Tetralthea ciliata</i>	Pink Bells
<i>Hardenbergia violacea</i>	Purple Coral-pea
<i>Wurmbea dioica</i>	Early Nancy
<i>Leptorhyncos tenuifolius</i>	Wiry Buttons
<i>Philotheca verrucosa</i>	Fairy Wax-flower
<i>Drosera macrantha</i>	Climbing Sundew
<i>Drosera auriculata</i>	Tall Sundew
<i>Xerochrysum viscosum</i>	Sticky Everlasting
<i>Ozothamnus obcordatus</i>	Grey Everlasting
<i>Hovea heterophylla</i>	Common Hovea
<i>Stackhousia monogyna</i>	Creamy Candles
<i>Microseris walteri</i>	Yam Daisy
<i>Grevillea alpina</i>	Downy Grevillea
<i>Diuris pardina</i>	Leopard Orchid
<i>Diuris chryseopsis</i>	Golden Moth
<i>Caladenia fuscata</i>	Pink Fingers
<i>Prostanthera denticulata</i>	Rough Mint-bush
<i>Rhytidoporum procumbens</i>	White Marianth



Golden Moth Orchids; unusual in Kalimna Park - photo Noel Young

Wildflower Wander 3 26th September - Boronia exclosures off the Red, White and Blue track – leaders Phil and Judy Hopley

Although the bush was dry for the time of year, and flowering seemed constrained, a close examination of the area yielded a good list of flowering plants, including:

<i>Acacia aspera</i>	Rough Wattle
<i>Acacia acinacea</i>	Gold-dust Wattle
<i>Grevillea alpina</i>	Downy Grevillea
<i>Daviesia ulicifolia</i>	Gorse Bitter-pea
<i>Boronia anemonifolia</i>	Sticky Boronia
<i>Tetralthea ciliata</i>	Pink Bells
<i>Caladenia fuscata</i>	Dusky Fingers
<i>Pimelea linifolia</i>	Slender Rice-flower
<i>Ozothamnus obcordatus</i>	Grey Everlasting (buds)
<i>Xerochrysum viscosum</i>	Sticky Everlasting (buds)
<i>Olearia teretifolia</i>	Cypress Daisy-bush
<i>Glossodia major</i>	Waxlip Orchid
<i>Rhytidoporum procumbens</i>	White Marianth
<i>Drosera peltata</i>	Tall Sundew
<i>Wurmbea dioica</i>	Early Nancy



<i>Microseris walteri</i>	Yam Daisy
<i>Diuris pardina</i>	Leopard Orchid
<i>Pterostylis nutans</i>	Nodding Greenhood
<i>Cyanicula caerulea</i>	Blue Caladenia
<i>Craspedia variabilis</i>	Billy Button
<i>Stackhousia monogyna</i>	Creamy Candles
<i>Senecio glomeratus</i>	Fireweed
<i>Philotheca verrucosa</i>	Fairy Wax-flower

[combined list by Noel Young, Phil and Judy Hopley]

Boronia and Cypress Daisy-bush, "double headed"
C. fuscata, caterpillar dining on Leopard Orchids
- photos by Noel Young



Notes and Specimens from 'Wildlife' magazine

George Broadway

Notes on specimens which were sent to Crosbie Morrison, Editor of "Wildlife" magazine and which appeared in the October edition in 1948, i.e. 70 years ago. Are people still discovering these specimens 70 years later and wondering what they are?

Insects

Rosebud; Small Ichneumon wasps parasites found in chrysalis of Cabbage White Butterfly. Since Cabbage Whites were introduced to Australia about 12 years ago, (i.e. 1936), several native parasitic wasps have adopted the Cabbage White as their legitimate prey.

Rocklea Q. ; Chrysalis of common Australian Crow butterfly, found normally in Queensland and In NSW as far South as Sydney. Last season (1947) it occurred in some numbers in Northern Victoria.

Warracknabeal; A Pepper-pot gall, not a flower, the nursery of a colony of tiny wasp-like insects.

Ivanhoe; Factory Chimney Galls, sometimes formed in immense crops on leaves and stems of eucalypts.

and Mitcham; The specimen from Mitcham is a fair sample of an infested leaf on which the larval males have settled in an enormous cluster and each insect, puncturing the leaf, has stimulated the plant to grow the “factory chimney” which opens at the top to release the mature insect – a winged male of the gall-making scale *Apiomorpha*. Each “chimney” is about 0.5 cm long. Females of this genus are wingless, grub-like creatures utterly unlike the males.

St Kilda; A large northern specimen of the Gum Emperor Moth, found throughout Australia. The larvae feed principally on eucalypt leaves and peppercorns but have adopted a number of other diets also. The “young Moth” which hatched from one of the eggs is a museum pest.

Stawell; Chinese Junk caterpillar, AKA Stinging Joey. Larva of the Mottled Cup Moth. Very common in spring and early summer when they sometimes defoliate a whole forest.

Williamstown; Small Drinker or Snout Moth

Highbury S.A.; “Wattle Berry” scale insect, *Cryptes baccatum*. The ants would have been gathering sticky “honeydew” from the bodies of the females, which look like pale blue eggs fixed to the twigs of the wattle.

Spiders

Mitiamo; Orchard spider with two egg sacs, harmless. Sometimes called “Bird-dropping Spider” Had the egg sacs been cut open instead of crushed, they would have revealed lots of small yellow eggs, more than 100 to each sac.

The other specimen was a female Red Back spider, venomous.

Tiny spider on outskirts of Andrew Cross Spider web was probably the male.

Genoa; A Trapdoor spider but not a dangerous one. It will show fight if approached and reveal quite long fangs. We have never heard of anyone being bitten by one.

Birds

Trentham; It is not unusual for seagulls to be found far inland especially if there is a sizeable body of water within reasonable distance, not necessarily salt. Some breed on inland lakes such as Lake Tyrrell and never go near the sea.

General

Canterbury; Amphipods or “hoppers” closely related to the sand hoppers found on beaches under piles of seaweed. They abound in moist gullies and among ferns and are the favourite food of Lyrebirds which are often to be seen scratching for them on the forest floor. They are often found in ferneries but do not seem to harm the plants. They are crustaceans, genus *Austrochiltonia subtenuis* and therefore related to crabs and crayfish.

Croydon; A question, not a specimen. How does a cat purr ? One can only say in much the same way a human hums.

The bite of a Blue-tongue or any other lizard is liable to cause blood poisoning because of the decaying meat fragments between the teeth. (It has been demonstrated to me that the teeth are too small to inflict much damage anyway.)

Geelong; Quartz crystals with some gleaming cubical crystals of pyrites (iron and copper sulphide).

Photo Observations

Joy Weatherill – September shots-
Nankeen Night Heron, Brown Quail
(in my garden) and Scarlet Robin



Judy Hopley – Castlemaine
Spider Orchid – an albino?



Noel Young – Wood Duck family in
the Botanical Gardens



Our speaker for the October meeting will be Pam Whiteley

With colleagues at the Melbourne Veterinary School of The University of Melbourne Pam Whiteley established Wildlife Health Victoria: Surveillance (WHV: S) in 2008. Pam has worked in mixed vet practice, was the first Vet then Vet/Curator at Healesville Sanctuary, then worked at the US National Wildlife Health Center in Wisconsin, CSIRO Australian Animal Health Lab in Geelong and at the Victorian vet diagnostic lab. She is an active member of the Wildlife Disease Association and WHV: S was re-elected to Wildlife Health Australia's Management Committee.



SEANA Spring 2019

During September your committee will be starting on the organisation of the SEANA gathering to be held in Castlemaine 4th-6th October 2019. We're seeking a few volunteers to join the organising subcommittee, ideas for excursions on the Saturday and Sunday - and offers to lead an excursion. Can you help?

Needlegrass Project

Marg Panter expects to start surveys for needlegrasses in October. Working sessions to assist removal in CBG (and elsewhere, possibly) in November or December, depending on timing of seeding. Marg is calling for volunteers to assist in the project. More info at the October meeting.

Your contributions to the Castlemaine Naturalist are always welcome. Observations, photos, notices or articles should be emailed to me at the address on the back page. For the November issue the deadline is October 26 – Ed.

Observations

at the September meeting

A pair of Powerful Owls have been seen in the Botanical Gardens for three days recently, as has a Nankeen Night Heron and lots of Carp in the lake – Peter and others.

Wednesday's wildflower walk was along Boundary Track. There was a controlled burn on one side of the track about 6 years ago, and according to Richard, plot counts on both sides have shown there is 50% more plant species on the unburnt side.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the club

Castlemaine Field Naturalists

Coming events

Fri Oct 12 meeting: speaker Pam Whiteley – Wildlife health surveillance

Sat Oct 13 field trip: Porcupine Ridge wildflowers – Geraldine and RP

Fri Nov 9 meeting: Kirsten Hutchinson and Deanna Marshall (Trust for Nature) - Plains Wanderers

Sat Nov 10 field trip: Wildflowers Fryers Ridge? – Richard Piesse

Mon Nov 12 - Roadside cleanup

Fri Dec 14 meeting: Members night

VISITORS ARE WELCOME AT CLUB ACTIVITIES

General meetings - (second Friday of each month, except January) are held in the Uniting Church (UCA) Hall (enter from Lyttleton St.) at 7.30 pm.

Field Trips - (Saturday following the general meeting) leave from the car park opposite Castle Motel, Duke Street at 1.30pm sharp unless stated otherwise. BYO morning and/or afternoon tea. Outdoor excursions are likely to be cancelled in extreme weather conditions. There are NO excursions on total fire ban days.

Business meetings - third Thursday of each month, except December, at George Broadways; 24a Greenhill Ave., at 6.00 pm. Members are invited to attend.

Club website (Web master: Chris Timewell) - <http://castlemainefnc.wordpress.com/>

Subscriptions for 2018

Ordinary membership: Single \$35, Family \$50

Pensioner or student: Single \$25, Family \$30

Subscription includes postage of the monthly newsletter, Castlemaine Naturalist

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